



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
TERRI LYNN LAND, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

## VOTING ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

### \*\*\*POLLING PLACE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM\*\*\*

The Michigan Department of State has received nearly \$700,000 from the Department of Health and Human Services to improve accessibility to and participation in the elections process for voters with disabilities. The grant program is funded through the Help America Vote Act of 2002. The Secretary of State's Bureau of Elections is responsible for overseeing the grant process.

The funds have been allocated to assist cities and townships with making improvements to the buildings used as polling places so that the buildings are in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as it pertains to polling places.

*If the buildings used as polling places in your jurisdiction cannot be made accessible, you must find an alternate location. You can also obtain information regarding temporary solutions on election day on the Department of Justice's ADA website at [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).*

### REQUIREMENTS

If your jurisdiction is interested in receiving financial assistance to make polling place accessibility improvements, you must do the following *for each polling place location*:

1. Complete the following documents:
  - a) You must complete the **Polling Place Accessibility Checklist and Certification Form** for each polling place location. (Many jurisdictions have already completed this survey and submitted it to the Bureau of Elections.) **Grant awards *will not* be considered unless you have completed a Polling Place Accessibility Checklist and Certification**

**form for the polling place location involved. You can access the Checklist and Certification forms on the Bureau of Elections' website at [www.michigan.gov/sos](http://www.michigan.gov/sos). (Click on "Elections in Michigan. Next click on "Information for Election Administrators.")**

Please note that a number of disability advocacy organizations throughout the state have volunteered to assist clerks in surveying their buildings and completing the checklists. A listing of the volunteers and their contact information is provided on the Bureau of Elections' website along with the Polling Place Accessibility Checklist and Certification Form. (See instructions above to access the document on the website.)

At least one volunteer is listed for each county. We strongly encourage you to partner with a volunteer when conducting the survey. In addition, you may also contact the Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service (MP&AS) if you have questions related to the survey checklist or accessibility issues in general. MP&AS can be contacted at: (800) 288-5923 (Lansing) or (800) 414-3956 (Livonia).

- b) You must complete the **Polling Place Improvement Plan Worksheet** for each polling place location.
2. Carefully read the section descriptions before completing the Polling Place Improvement Plan Worksheet.
  3. Whenever possible, include pictures of the area for which you seek improvements *prior to and after* the completion of the needed improvements.
  4. No later than June 24, 2005 submit the Polling Place Accessibility Checklist, Certification Form and the Polling Place Improvement Plan Worksheet for each polling place location that needs improvement to:

Amy Shell  
Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Elections  
P.O. Box 20126  
Lansing, Michigan 48901-0726  
Phone: (517) 373-2540  
Email: [shella@michigan.gov](mailto:shella@michigan.gov)

## **REVIEW AND GRANT AWARD PROCESS**

1. After we receive your jurisdiction's Polling Place Improvement Plan Worksheet, we will review your plan to determine whether the improvements you intend to make are eligible for reimbursement under this program.
2. After all plans are received and approved by the Bureau of Elections, Bureau staff will cumulate the total dollar amount requested by all jurisdictions throughout the state and determine grant awards based upon the availability of funds.
3. If your plan is approved, we will notify you of the maximum grant award you are eligible to receive. We will also provide you with a legal agreement that you must sign and return to us in order to receive a reimbursement. As the total amount available is limited, the full cost of your improvements may not be covered by this grant program. Therefore, some amount of funding may be required at the local level to cover the cost of improvements.

**NOTE: Projects that you have already started and/or completed *do not* qualify for reimbursement under this program.**

4. Payments will be issued on a reimbursement basis only. If your improvements are approved for reimbursement under the program, you will be required to make the improvements and provide evidence of payment prior to receiving reimbursement. Reimbursements will be issued for the lesser of 1) the actual expenditure of *each individual* improvement *within each category* or 2) the amount awarded for *each individual* improvement *within each category*.
5. This program is available to city and township clerks only. We understand that many of the buildings used as polling places throughout the state are not owned or controlled by the local jurisdiction. If a grant award is sought for improvements to buildings that are not owned or controlled by the city or township, arrangements must be made between the local jurisdiction and the building ownership or management to allow for issuing reimbursements to the local jurisdiction.
6. Any building for which financial assistance is provided through this grant program must be used as a polling place for a minimum of three even-year

November general elections following the issuance of the grant. You will be required to commit to this in the legal agreement provided with your grant award announcement.

7. You are responsible for having knowledge of and complying with any local ordinances or historical site requirements that may be relevant to the improvements you intend to make.
8. Please note that regardless of the amount of reimbursement a jurisdiction may or may not be eligible to receive, it is still required that any building used as a polling place must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as specified in the Polling Place Accessibility Checklist.

### **FEDERAL AND STATE GUIDELINES RELATING TO IMPROVEMENT COSTS**

If your application is approved, we will provide you with a detailed legal agreement that you must sign and return to us before we issue a reimbursement. However, following are federal and state guidelines to be aware of as you make plans for improvements. (This list does not encompass all legal requirements.)

1. To ensure that costs are reasonable, your jurisdiction (the “grantee”) must solicit competitive bids whenever possible. At least three competitive bids are required for all purchases over \$25,000. Bids must be obtained from independent third parties. For all purchases, the grantee must avoid the appearance or occurrence of a conflict of interest.
2. Grantees may not procure services from businesses or individuals that are debarred or suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs. When possible, Grantees must take appropriate affirmative steps to support minority business firms, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms and shall give preference in procurement to the purchase of specific products containing recycled materials (as identified in the guidelines published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency).
3. To the fullest extent possible, all equipment and products purchased with these funds should be American made.

4. When issuing statements, press releases, requests for proposals, bid solicitations and other documents describing projects funded in whole or in part by federal money, all grantees shall clearly state:
  - a) the percentage of the total costs of the program or projects which will be financed with federal money;
  - b) the dollar amount of federal funds for the project or program; and
  - c) the percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by nongovernmental sources.



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## **POLLING PLACE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

### **\*\*\*SECTION DESCRIPTIONS\*\*\***

#### **SECTION I. JURISDICTION CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Section I needs to be completed only once.**

- In this section you provide complete contact information for your jurisdiction's clerk and treasurer. Reimbursements will be issued to the jurisdiction after proof of payment has been received by the Bureau of Elections.

#### **SECTION II. POLLING PLACE INFORMATION**

**Section II needs to be completed for each location for which you seek reimbursement for improvements.**

- Section II provides basic information regarding the polling place name and location.

#### **SECTION III. TYPE OF IMPROVEMENT AND PROJECT ESTIMATES**

**Section III needs to be completed for each location for which you seek reimbursement for improvements.**

- You must itemize each improvement under one of six categories and provide the following: 1) the estimated cost for the improvement 2) documentation to support your estimated cost for individual projects exceeding \$2,500 and 3) the estimated completion date of the improvement. (Reimbursements will be issued for the lesser of 1) the actual expenditure of *each individual*

improvement *within each category* or 2) the amount awarded for *each individual improvement within each category*.)

- Each category has space for three improvements to be listed. If you have additional improvements in a particular category, make copies of the page and attach the additional sheets as necessary.
- The categories under Section III correspond to the Polling Place Accessibility Checklist categories. A brief explanation of each category is provided below. Please note that you will need to refer to the Checklist to confirm the complete range of requirements for each category under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Parking**

Parking refers to the space made available for parking vehicles. Improvements made under “**Parking**” may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Increasing the total number of accessible parking spaces at a particular location.
- Adding or improving signage used to identify the accessible parking spaces.
- Adjusting the width of the accessible parking spaces.
- Repairing damage to the parking lot that could create an obstacle, i.e., loose gravel or concrete.

### **Passenger Drop-Off Area**

The Passenger Drop-Off Area, if the location has one, is an area at which a vehicle may pull up closer to the building to allow a person to exit the vehicle and have a shorter distance to travel into the building. Improvements under “**Passenger Drop-Off Area**” may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Constructing curb cuts and ramps, if needed.
- Leveling the drop-off area.
- Adjusting the width and slope of curb ramps.
- Repairing loose gravel or concrete.

## **Exterior Path of Travel/Sidewalks**

Exterior Path of Travel/Sidewalks refers to the route an individual must travel from the exterior of the building up to the building entrance. The path of travel could begin at any parking space (including the accessible parking space), a passenger drop-off area located close to the building or a drop-off location where a person can exit public transportation. Improvements under **“Exterior Path of Travel/Sidewalks”** may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Constructing curb cuts.
- Widening or repairing sidewalks.
- Constructing ramps (if a voter must negotiate steps in order to enter the building).
- Widening ramps.
- Repairing loose gravel or concrete.

## **Building Entrance**

The Building Entrance refers to the accessible door a voter would use to enter the building in which voting is taking place. There must be a fully accessible path of travel from the exterior of the building to the accessible entrance. Improvements under **“Building Entrance”** may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Widening doorways.
- Installing new door hardware to make it easier to open the door (this may include new doorknobs or electronic openers).
- Leveling thresholds.
- Widening the interior and exterior clear space.

## **Interior Path of Travel/Hallways**

Interior Path of Travel/Hallways refers to the route a voter must travel upon entering the building into the room where voting is taking place. Improvements under **“Interior Path of Travel”** may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Removing obstacles and protruding objects from hallways.
- Installing ramps.
- Widening the path of travel.



## **Voting Area**

The Voting Area refers to the room in which voting is taking place. Improvements under “**Voting Area**” may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Widening the doorway a voter must enter from the hallway into the room where voting is taking place.
- Leveling doorway thresholds.
- Providing an accessible voting booth to accommodate a voter in wheelchair.
- Providing adequate space so that a wheelchair can move easily through the room and ensuring that the room is free of obstacles and obstructions that would make it difficult to move about the room.

## **SECTION IV. SUMMARY OF COST FOR POLLING PLACE IMPROVEMENTS**

**Section IV needs to be completed for each polling place for which you seek payment for improvements.** Section IV provides information on the cost of all improvements to be made at the location and the start/completion dates of the improvements. It is also your attestation to the accuracy of the information provided.

You must retain information in your office to support your estimates. Supporting documentation must be included with your application for any single improvement that exceeds \$2,500.

## **QUESTIONS**

Please direct any questions to:

**Amy Shell**  
**Michigan Department of State**  
**Bureau of Elections**  
**P.O. Box 20126**  
**Lansing, Michigan 48901-0726**  
**(517) 373-2540**  
**email: [shella@michigan.gov](mailto:shella@michigan.gov)**



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(Refer to the Accompanying Instructions)

**\*\*This section only needs to be completed once.\*\***

**Section I. Jurisdiction Contact Information**

**COUNTY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CITY ☐ TOWNSHIP ☐** \_\_\_\_\_

CLERK CONTACT INFORMATION	TREASURER CONTACT INFORMATION
Name:	Name:
Full Address:	Full Address:
Zip Code:	Zip Code:
Fax:	Fax:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:



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**\*\*\*Complete Sections II, III and IV for *each location* for which you seek payment for improvements.\*\*\***

**Section II. Polling Place Information**

<b>Polling Place Name</b>	<b>Building is Owned/Controlled by:</b>
<b>Full Address:</b>	
<b>Zip Code:</b>	
<b>Precinct Number(s)</b>	

- 1) Do you pay rent or any other costs associated with using the building as a polling place on election day? Yes ☐ No ☐  
Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Does the building owner agree to offset any of the rental/building use costs if a grant award is made? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐  
Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Would you and/or the building owner be agreeable to an external survey of the building if we determine one is needed? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐
- 4) Do you commit to using this building as a polling place for the next three even-year November general elections? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☐  
(You must agree to this stipulation in order for this location to be eligible for a grant award.)



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**\*\*A detailed description of each category is included in the instructions.\*\***

**\*\*Provide a description of each *individual* improvement to be completed within each category.\*\***

**\*\*Whenever possible, provide pictures of the area for which you seek payment for improvements.\*\***

**\*\*Attach additional sheets if necessary.\*\***

**\*\*Attach documentation to support your cost estimates.\*\***

### Section III. Type of Improvement and Project Estimates

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Parking</b> <b>Total # of Improvements planned for this location:</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Were bids solicited? Yes/No</b>
<b>Description of Improvement:</b>			
<b>1.</b>			
<b>2.</b>			
<b>3.</b>			

### Section III. Continued

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Passenger Drop Off Area</b> <b>Total # of Improvements planned for this location:</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Were bids solicited? Yes/No</b>
<b>Description of Improvement:</b>			
1.			
2.			
3.			

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Exterior Path of Travel/Sidewalks</b> <b>Total # of Improvements planned for this location:</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Were bids solicited? Yes/No?</b>
<b>Description of Improvement:</b>			
1.			
2.			
3.			

### Section III. Continued

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Building Entrance</b> <b>Total # of Improvements planned for this location:</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Were bids solicited? Yes/No</b>
<b>Description of Improvement:</b>			
1.			
2.			
3.			

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Interior Path of Travel/Hallways</b> <b>Total # of Improvements planned for this location:</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Were bids solicited? Yes/No</b>
<b>Description of Improvement:</b>			
1.			
2.			
3.			

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Voting Area</b> <b>Total # of Improvements planned for this location:</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>	<b>Were bids solicited? Yes/No</b>
<b>Description of Improvement:</b>			
1.			
2.			
3.			



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**Section IV. Summary of Cost for Polling Place Improvements**

**\*\*You must attach documentation to support your estimates.\*\***

**Estimated Cost of All Improvements Combined for this Polling Place:**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Start Date of First Improvement:**

**Estimated Completion Date of all Improvements:**

I hereby certify that the information provided in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date